

SHOULD U.S. EVER STRIKE THE FIRST BLOW

Yes, Says a Military Expert - If Russia Prepares to Attack

In a nuclear war, fought with missiles, the first blow could be fatal.

What that means, one military analyst warns, is this:

- "Massive retaliation" is outmoded.
- The United States no longer can afford to let an enemy strike first.

Then must U.S. start a "preventive" war?

This expert suggests there is an honorable alternative—a way that would assure the U. S. at least an even break.

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The United States learned once the danger of letting an enemy strike the first blow. That happened in 1941, when Japan attacked Pearl Harbor by surprise.

That attack by Japan was made with what we now contemptuously call "conventional" weapons. Yet it dealt the U. S. a blow from which it took this country more than three years to recover.

Today, with nuclear weapons, the danger of letting an enemy strike the first blow has greatly increased. Transoceanic missiles will further increase this danger.

Yet the U. S. Government appears still willing to "let the other fellow strike first." The Eisenhower Administration is continuing to rely on the policy of "massive retaliation"—the theory that the threat of American retaliation will deter Soviet leaders from attack.

Secretary of State John Foster Dulles has declared that the United Nations Charter "binds us not to use armed force against any country unless first an armed attack occurs."

Once an enemy attacks, the Eisenhower Administration's plan is that the U. S. Strategic Air Force will strike back, with devastating nuclear power.

When we retaliate, our employment of "area bombing" will be no more merciful than the Reds' attack. The American plan specifically calls for destruction of sources of raw materials and key agricultural areas, as well as of strictly military targets. Our policy only demands that Americans be killed first, before we strike.

Now, however, the increasing flexibility and power of thermonuclear weapons compels the U. S. to review this policy of conceding the first blow to Moscow.

When first constructed, A-bombs could be delivered only by large planes, and only in large sizes that resulted inevitably in wide destruction. But now we have developed smaller bombs whose power can be limited to that necessary to destroy strictly military targets. These new bombs can be pinpointed on military targets. They can be delivered by planes, by submarines, by guns and by missiles. They can be used for offense or for defense. Like all weapons, they are

offensive when they threaten you, defensive when they threaten your enemy.

We know that our Strategic Air Command can launch an all-out air attack without mobilization, that our submarines can deploy in positions to attack targets deep in Red territory.

We must assume that, likewise, Soviet planes and submarines can attack our cities, merchant marine and men-of-war with little or no warning.

After such an attack by Russia, would our armed forces be able to retaliate?

Certainly, our armed forces could deliver a more effective attack if their attack were made before they had sustained heavy losses. Certainly, thousands of Americans will be deprived from death if our Government refuses to concede Moscow the first blow. Certainly, we can help our allies more before our Navy, our merchant ships and our coastal cities are exposed to Red submarines and our military shore establishments and our industrial areas are desolated by bombs.

Today we are pledged to aid any nation in the Middle East which is attacked by international Communism. We are blocking Red China's entry into the United Nations and the advance of Red Russia in the Middle East.

Secretary Dulles admits that previous experience indicates that a fundamental conflict like that now existing between international Communism and the free world ultimately erupts into war. He seems confident that his skillful diplomacy can avert war. President Eisenhower apparently agrees with him, and they accept this calculated but unpredictable risk for their country:

It must not be forgotten, however, that Moscow—as well as Tokyo did in 1941—appreciates the advantages of striking the first blow. Moscow has been told that we will await her attack—that we will not strike first.

It is perilous to assume that in the future the Red general staff will be deterred from attack by fear of retaliation. In 1941, Stalin deliberately risked provoking Hitler rather than abandon Russian ambitions in the Balkans. The Kremlin, we